

The

MESSENGER



Hello! Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to You

of OUR LADY OF AFRICA

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The King of Uganda in Rome

Our Holy Father granted a private audience to the King and Queen of Uganda on their trip to Rome. This visit has great significance since the royal family is not of our faith and the young King Mutesa II is the grandson of Mwanga, who put to death the Martyrs of Uganda in 1886.

It was these same martyrs who were beatified in 1920 and from among whom His Holiness chose Blessed Charles Lwangwa to be the heavenly patron of Catholic Action in Africa.



Left to right: Two seminarians from Uganda studying at the Propaganda, Chief Mylyanti, King Mutesa II, His Holiness Pope Pius XII, the Queen, Rev. M. Taris, W. F., and another seminarian.

WANTED!

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Roberto Contemplates

IT WAS A GREAT FEAST. All the little boys, even the tiniest, were allowed to assist at the Solemn High Mass. How many things there are to see! The lighted altar, the big palms, the children crowding in to make room for other arrivals, the women and girls in their bright colored dresses, the catechists with their red badges, who circulate to keep order — all this little Roberto had already seen. Then he turned his little head to see the Sisters and the big stand of the Father who directs the singing. At each pillar a large banner with letters which Roberto does not yet know how to read; and there, to the left, behind the Sisters, a large crucifix.

One eye is not enough to see Jesus on the Cross. Quickly Roberto passed to the other side of the bench, and there sat with his back turned to the altar.

I was going to give him a disapproving look, but his big childish eyes fixed on the Cross stopped me. Roberto no longer saw the banners and the organ and the Sisters . . . he was alone with the Divine Crucified.

THE HEAD CROWNED WITH THORNS . . . and his little hand went slowly around his head. I did not have to look back to see the place of the thorns. Before me the little chocolate-colored finger stopped on the temple, on the forehead, above the eyes, then it came down the length of his face to follow the traces of the blood.

HIS ARMS ARE STRETCHED OUT . . . and Roberto also extended his.

HIS HANDS ARE PIERCED . . . Roberto looked at his own hands one after the other, put his finger in the place of the nails, and compared them with those of Christ before him.

BLOOD EVERYWHERE . . . in vain

did Roberto look for a drop of blood on His suit which was nice and clean.

THE FEET ARE ALSO PIERCED . . . and here Roberto lifted up one little bare foot after the other to the bench. His little finger again looked for the marks of the nails; then his feet were slowly lowered, crossed this time one over the other, like Jesus'.

Roberto heard Mass at the foot of the Cross.

Sr. Marie Aloyse, W. S.



OUR FRONT COVER

Happy little orphan who, thanks to your generosity, has found a home at one of our orphanages. Your Christmas offering will help many other abandoned children to find a home and become children of God.

Life Began at Sixty for **Maria, The Widow of Tebano**

By Very Reverend J. Alfred Richard, W. F.

TEBANO is situated in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, West Africa. It was just another pagan village until a sixty-year-old widow stole her way into the fold of Christ by accepting Baptism during a severe illness. This first grace was but the beginning of a long chain of heavenly favors for the settlement: Baptism had made an apostle of the widow from Tebano who was now called "Maria."

As soon as her illness was over she came to the Mission to complete her instruction. After the required time and sufficient knowledge, we admitted her to the reception of the Sacraments. Then things started happening in Tebano. Maria seemed fired with zeal, fruit of her love for Christ — not tempestuous nor fanatical, but merely burning with the desire of having others share her peace and her joy.

Through calm persistence, she obtained from the pagan elders in her own household to have the children gather around her at the foot of a crucifix for the morning and evening prayers. At nightfall, a Rosary was recited in common. Then, by the dim light of the flickering fire, she would tell the children about the God she loved and teach them the fundamentals of the religion she had embraced. No one objected to this. On the contrary, I often caught a few grownups listening to her evening "sermons." They even admitted to me: "Father, Maria is our catechist; we do not need a man-catechist in this village with her around."

One day, as I was slowly riding through the village on my motorcycle, a woman ran towards me and by her excited cries I knew something was amiss. She informed me that a young mother was dying in childbirth. Parking my cycle in the shade I hurried to the hut pointed out to me, hoping that time was still in my favor. I was met at the door by Maria. "Father," she said, "I was here when she passed away. She accepted Baptism, and the infant who has just died was also baptized. I am now having the people say a prayer of submission to God who gave us life and can take it away when He sees fit."

"Maria," I told her, "you are a jewel. How nice of you to think of others that way."

"Are we not all children of God, Father?" replied the good woman. "Must not we, the favored in His household, see that the less privileged also receive the benefits of His boundless mercy?"

That evening, during my visit to the Blessed Sacrament in the dimly lighted mission church, my thoughts went back to Maria. The change in her was remarkable. Illiterate, a pagan for three-score years, possessing only the basic religious truths, her faith and her wisdom of spiritual things were stronger and more active than in most of our Christians. It was really a case of "What had God wrought" . . . in Maria's soul.

GOD'S LITTLE ONE

More than ever before, I understood the words of Christ, praising the Lord of heaven and earth " . . . who didst hide these things from the wise and prudent, and didst reveal them to little ones" (Matt. XI-25). Without any shade of doubt, Maria was a "little one"; she had in her own way grasped the true meaning of "loving God with her heart, her soul and her all."

Maria's self-sacrificing knew no bounds. She continued instructing the tots in her village, rendering timely aid to her neighbors and ever dedicating herself to some worthy cause. Not long before I left the mission fields to return to this country Maria gave another proof of her brotherly love.

MARIA'S CHALLENGE

Cerebrospinal meningitis was ravaging the country; people, especially children, were dying by the hundreds. Our dispensaries administered to ten thousand afflicted persons in the single year 1945. Due to the efficacy of the sulfa drugs with which we were treating the patients, only a thousand deaths occurred in our area.

At Tebano village, pagan to the core, the elders were told by the sorcerer to offer sacrifice after sacrifice if their children were to be spared by the deadly epidemic.

In Maria's compound the elders were about decided to sacrifice a cow when our apostle came to know of their decision. She immediately called them together. "Not a single child in this house will be stricken by the



GOODBYE TO WEST AFRICA

Several years ago Sr. M. Noelita (Antoinette Strugg, from Detroit, Michigan) heard the call of Christ to leave all and follow Him across the sea to Navrongo, West Africa. Unhesitatingly Sister answered the call. Today our Lord asks her for the second time to leave everything . . . the mission, the people she so quickly learnt to love . . . and again Sister answers, "Yes, Lord."

After a long journey by air, land and sea, Sister is now back in the States giving a helping hand with the promotion work at Metuchen.

terrible disease if you follow my advice," she promised them. "Morning and night, I want you all to join me and the children in saying the Rosary as long as this plague lasts. Do this and I guarantee we will all be spared." There was some hesitation among these dyed-in-the-wool pagans. But they had so often witnessed the excellent results of Maria's intercession in previous cases that all agreed to her condition, though threatening to expel her if it didn't work.

Within a few days her new converts had, willingly or not, all learned to say the Rosary and they were faithful to the morning and night rendezvous with Maria. Children were dying in the other compounds of the village. Of course, Maria was ever on the alert to baptize them with their parents' consent. But it is credit to her unwavering confidence in God that not one child in her own compound was stricken during the epidemic.

With the coming of the rains the plague ended. There were tears of sorrow in many

a home. The elders whose children had been spared approached Maria.

"How can we repay you, Maria? You have saved our families from the fingers of Death." "It is to God that you must be grateful," she replied. "Collect a little sum of money (5 shillings or \$1.25) and I will bring it to the Mission at Kaleo where the Fathers will celebrate a High Mass of thanksgiving. Let this be your offering."

THE WIDOW'S MITE

The following Sunday, after Maria had gone to confession, attended Mass and received Holy Communion as usual, she was in my office to present the Mass stipend collected from the grateful village folks who had escaped the terrible malady. Her own offering, the widow's mite, was a hen for the Father's table.

May our Lord give you Maria's faith and love, and above all her unremitting zeal for the salvation of your neighbor.

African Children at the Manger



IT IS A PLEASING SIGHT to see the little Africans at the Crib. Much time and thought is spent to arrange it. Of necessity, little oil lamps must take the place of electric lights; no painted landscape adorns the background and the pictures of the Blessed Virgin and the Infant Jesus, of St. Joseph and the shepherds are not beautifully colored statues. However, there are palms and banana leaves to shade the crib and the little worshippers admire it all and the results of our efforts have touched the inner chord of native beauty.

Clothed in their white or brightly colored dresses, with rosaries or medals around their necks, barefoot, they noiselessly approach the crib, rising on tip-toe, trying to have a good view of it. With shining eyes they gaze on the Child Jesus, rosy and smiling in the manger; on the Blessed Mother, whose head is bent in loving admiration of her Son; and on St. Joseph, the patient and humble Guardian of the Holy Family.

But silence is broken by a young and shrill voice protesting loudly: "I want to see; I want to see." A little girl whose head reaches no higher than the Communion rail has been trying in vain to climb upon it. One of the bigger girls lifts her up and she is happy to see the infant Jesus. But she wishes to hold Him in her arms, kiss His rosy cheeks and caress his golden curls.

There is much curiosity about the shepherds and their flock. "Why is the tall one bare-footed when the others wear sandals?" "Look at that one with the flute. Why did he

not bring a lamb?" "That dog might bite Little Jesus. Why do they let him come so near?"

The sight of a White Sister in the church reminds them that they must be quiet. It is time to leave and they offer the Divine Babe their presents: a few colored beads, a bright flower, a safety pin, a copper bracelet. How pleased the Heart of Jesus must be with these tokens of love from His pure and ingenuous little ones.

And now the children have gone to their play; the church is empty. Little Maria, just about five, returns and tip-toes to the Crib. She climbs over the Communion rail and carefully raising the Infant Jesus in her arms goes and hides behind a pillar. There she sits on the floor clasping the Christ Child close to her heart whispering her love and admiration.

But the other children's voices are heard at the door; they must see the crib once more. As they arrive at the crib there is a moment of horrified silence; then a great hubbub breaks out. "Where is the thief? Where is the thief?" And little Maria is discovered in her hiding place! She is led in disgrace to Sister, who on hearing the story can scarcely restrain a smile. "But my dear child, why did you do that?" And Maria stutters in her bewilderment: "Please, Mamma, do not scold me. I shall never, never, do it again. But the little Jesus looked so beautiful and I love him so much that I had to take Him in my arms!"

Sr. Mary, W. S.

OUR WISHES

From the Mediterranean to the Sahara, from the banks of the Niger to the shores of the Great Lakes of Africa, our Catholics and Catechumens join with us in wishing our friends and benefactors a most Blessed Christmastide abounding in the choicest blessings of the Infant Savior and a bright, happy and prosperous New Year under the maternal protection of our Blessed Mother.

CHRISTMAS IN KABYLIA

DECEMBER FIRST is greeted with joy here. Our little girls ranging from four to eight are wide awake to life all around them, while their pure voices sing of perpetual happiness.

"December! It is the month of Christmas. Is it Christmas tomorrow, Sister?"

"No, not yet. There are still twenty-five days."

"Twenty-five days! Oh, that is too many, Sister."

"Well, that gives us time to make a good preparation for such a great feast."

We immediately set to work. Votes were taken on the following proposition.

"How would you like to start right now to prepare the Crib for Baby Jesus? Each sacrifice made will buy a straw which you will carefully keep until Christmas. Then you would have a sheaf to line the Divine Babe's crib."

The idea was adopted wholeheartedly and there reigned the greatest ambition for sacrifices. The eldest of our girls decided to come out first. She was very serious about it, regularly every night she was seen taking up the account of the straws her sacrifices deserved.

"I washed the dishes and swept the porch. Then I made the bed of a small one and helped another to dress. I said my prayers well. In school I applied myself to writing and reading well. I did not slap any of the younger ones." (One must know that this act of virtue is very meritorious for a Kabyle girl, because to slap is to affirm one's superiority.)

That evening eight straws were added to the swelling sheaf.

Days passed and the feast approached while the thought of it grew more and more real.

One morning the children declared they all prayed in bed before going to sleep.

"What prayer did you say?"

"My God, help us to behave well in preparation for Christmas," came the answer.

At last Christmas morn dawned and was greeted with cries of joy. In the wink of an eye everyone was ready. A stop at the convent chapel crib where they sang, "Lovely Infant" and then off to church.

After the Mass on returning home the door opened and the children could see lights. A Christmas tree, a real one, all

decorated with lights!

What a discovery, the branches are laden with oranges and toys . . .

Their eyes are not big enough to take in all the beauty of this surprise!

The scale mounts high with joy: laughing, jumping, dancing, clapping!

However, Christmas holds for our little ones the revelation of another happiness, one quite new to them: there is even more joy in giving than in receiving.

At the sight of their treasures, spontaneously they think of the misery of the poor little ones they see coming to the dispensary. Each little girl put aside something for the less fortunate, an orange or even a toy. Will not these bear the tidings of joy: "Gloria in excelsis Deo!" to one or more

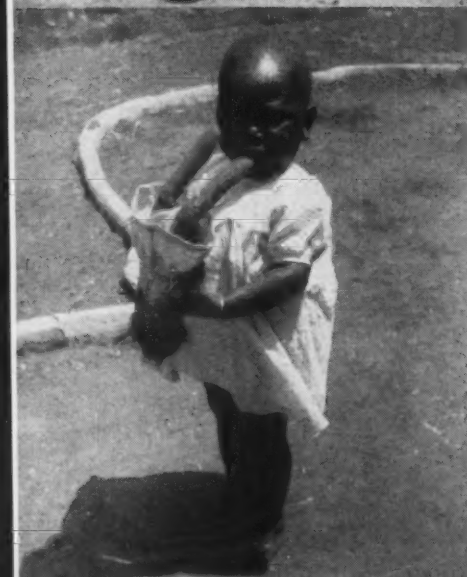
of the nearby villages?

In the afternoon the children paid another visit to the Crib at church; it was surely more appreciated than any outing. There was a new attraction. An angel played some Christmas Carols. Quite a marvel!

The feast is over now, but what about good behavior? A look at the Crib will tell its tale. In exchange for the straw the Infant Jesus gave each one a little lamb. It stands at a certain distance from the Crib and bears around the neck the name of its owner. According to what the day has been it takes a step forward or backward . . . Who will

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A Day With Ou

PERHAPS YOU THINK we find our little black babies fast asleep when we go to wake them each morning. Oh no! As soon as the first rays of sun rise in the east childish games begin.

Take a peep with me in the large room where little cots are standing side by side. Do not be astonished to see everything pell-mell. All those who can (the eldest is just four years old) have climbed out of bed, dragging sheets and blankets with them.

The tiny ones, holding on to the bars of their cots, take an active part in the games, wishing they could follow the older children.

As soon as they see you, all come as quickly as possible, some running, others on all fours or shuffling along as best they can. In less than no time, you are encircled by this happy little crowd greeting you with cries of joy . . . who could help but love them!

Then . . . it is time for a bath. The most courageous pass first, the others sitting around waiting their turn with patience or resignation . . . "as all must pass," think some, "Alas, no exception," say others, enemies of water. Soon shiny black faces are glistening in the sun.

It is now time for the daily dose of quinine to ward off attacks of the dreaded malaria. This is a happy time for our darlings, they crunch the bitter tablet as we would a candy and thoroughly enjoy it. What a success, they need no coaxing I can assure you!

The bigger ones are on duty, like faithful policemen; they watch that no one gets two tablets. "Toka," they say to those who have received their portion; meaning, go along, you're served.

Glasses of milk now appear . . . big black eyes open wide and each wants to be served the first. Cries are heard on all sides but as the distribution progresses the cries diminish. Black shiny faces are lost behind tumblers and all we can hear is "gurgle . . . gurgle" as the milk disappears.

Those who finish first cast envious looks at the others who are lucky enough to still have some left. Then it is time to play. Off they toddle one behind the other, tottering and stumbling; the older ones pulling the little tots desperately along. At last all find a place on the big mat stretched out on the grass. It is here they will pass the rest of the day. What doing? Playing just as little ones know how to play among themselves. Chasing a little insect that has dared to cross their mat, disputing as to the ownership of a blade of grass. Each child has his own character. This one is very serious we hardly ever see her laugh, on

Our Little Ones

the other hand, that one is just as radiant as the noonday sun. There are those who look at you rather melancholically with very big black eyes and see that chubby one; she is called NYIRANATAMA which means "Queen of chubby cheeks" . . . her face is so round. Here is one who does not like society; he goes alone in a corner to dream.

But all are so lovable and the morning rolls by to be followed immediately by the most important part of the day for a little African . . . noon and the mid-day meal. This comprises a kind of thick paste made with flour and water which is eaten with a good quantity of sauce or, if they can get it, meat.

The children are quite adept at rolling this paste into balls in their little bronze hands. This is dipped in sauce and . . . oh, how good it is! A native girl, who helps take care of these tots, rolls small balls for the younger ones who make them disappear into their mouths with extraordinary skill. Not a cry is heard; each looks with wide open eyes to see what the neighbor is getting. For it is not like in our country where each has his own plate. No, the food is served on a big dish which is placed in the middle of the group and each one serves himself as he wishes.

The next dish is rice and soon all are satiated.

The sun is now directly overhead and the little ones are beginning to feel drowsy. They cannot resist an afternoon nap, while the bigger ones brave the hot African sun and continue their games.

When the day is done, little chubby hands are joined in prayer — "Dear little Jesus, thank you for everything — please make me good. God bless Sister and all good people who help us. Amen."

But all good things come to an end, even the care-free day of a little black baby. The sun is beginning to set behind the tall palm trees and once more the bath scene begins. It is time to go to bed, what a shame! They were having such a good time and, like most children, our little ones are not quite pleased.

Oh! our little orphans are certainly cute and clever. They have found a solution to the problem. As soon as their nurse has closed their door and gone home, out of the bed they scramble and the games begin again until at last unable to keep their dark eyes open, these sleepy heads decide to hide themselves under the blanket.

. . . Oh God, these are precious pearls you have confided to our care. Watch over them, dear Jesus, may they remain forever pure and innocent. They are the hope of the future, the hope of the African Church.

Sr. Jean Damien, W.S.



Twins in Urundi

Sr. Jeanne Marie, W. S.

URUNDI FAMILIES warmly welcome each new arrival; there are never too many babies! So it is rather surprising to hear that, among the pagans, twins are considered as bearers of bad luck. They are supposed to come from Kiranga, the evil spirit, who is greatly feared by all those who do not know of our dear Lord.

Everyone knows about it when twins are born, not only in the village itself, but for miles around. Bananas, and other edible presents are brought to the mother, who does not know whether to be happy or not to suddenly find herself in the limelight! At any rate, the food will come in handy as a feast is being prepared and every one expects rich fare! The women of the adjoining villages have come to the rescue and brought along their grinding stones and they are kept busy all the day long; relieving one another when they grow tired.

The witch-doctor is the "Master of ceremonies." He looks very much pleased with himself, and no wonder; since he is going to make big profit out of this affair. Being the only one who can ward off the spells of Kiranga, he gets just what he asks for; and you can be sure, he asks for plenty! The first thing he does on arriving is to spray the house, yard, banana trees, as well as all those present, with a "magic" liquid made of special herbs.

Meanwhile the mother of the twins has put on her best cloth and upon her head has been placed a crown made from the outside leaves of maize cobs. This is the Murundi sign of motherhood. The unfortunate heroes of the occasion are put into a basket and left exposed to any kind of weather. Since they are the cause of all this fuss and bother, no one thinks it strange that they should be put to some inconvenience. No wonder very few twins survive!

Then comes the dance of Kiranga. One of the natives represents the Evil One; he looks rather like Satan for he has covered his face with chalk and put bits of bark from the palm tree in his hair. He takes up his stand by the mother holding a spear between his

knees. Each one in the assembly must pay homage bringing gifts, which it is hoped, will appease Kiranga and remove any possibility of the "evil eye" falling on those present. During the dances, everyone lets out terrific yells and shouts and the "Prince of Darkness" answers by roaring like a lion. All this does not last but for one day. No, it goes on for the whole duration of the moon.

The next move is to a nearby stream. No doubt, you are wondering what has happened to the unfortunate twins. They have changed their basket by now and have been promoted to goatskins! One is on his mother's back, the other on that of a relative, but the basket in which they spent the first days of their lives is still important. The person who leads the procession to the stream carries it in front of him. Everyone is yelling and making as much noise as possible. On arriving at destination, the parents kneel down on the bank; while the witch-doctor, who is again "Master of Ceremonies," hits them hard on the back with the basket and then ducks their heads in the stream several times.

After this all return to the village and the witch-doctor plants two trees by the hut as a sign that the twins, once more in their basket, may now grow and get strong. His work being finished, the witch-doctor takes one more jug of banana beer and returns home.

This is by no means the end, because usually one or both of the little mites die and another ceremony is needed to ensure that their spirits will not come back with evil intentions. The poor mother, too, has her share this time. Her face is covered with white earth mixed with "magic" liquid.

All those who came the first time simply must come back, if they do not, Kiranga will certainly be offended and who knows what will happen! The witch-doctor is called upon again to get in touch with the spirits of the twins and ask them not to harm anyone in the village.

The babies' coffins are made of hollowed-out tree trunks, which look like canoes; the inside is covered with white earth and well wetted with a "magic" liquid. The body is placed inside and covered with lime. Of course there is more singing and dancing to entertain the Evil One.

And the burial ground? The coffins are very seldom buried, but are usually just left outside in the yard or in the banana plantation. No one bothers about the unpleasant smell! If the father is away from home, the bodies are in the hut until he returns, even if his absence be prolonged . . . the hut then

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“Things” at Kasina



ONE MORNING, we set out from Kasina on our bicycles in search of a young woman patient of ours who could not come for her treatment because her mother was ill. After cycling all morning and inquiring everywhere, we were not able to find her village. No one seemed to know her. Then, quite by chance, we heard of a hut where somebody was ill.

Entering, we found a young mother and a newly born baby, a premature one at that, absolutely red with cold and wretchedness. The mother was still very weak and obviously in need of care, but we were no sooner inside than the old grandmother tried to push us out. She did not want any help from us; and, for all she cared, her granddaughter might die just as she was.

Nevertheless, I took the baby from the mother, and baptized it, since they wanted to throw it into the bush. Then, objecting to their plan, I told them the baby was a human being and we might be able to save its life. They laughed at me and said that was absurd.

We were just ready to leave with the baby swaddled in rags, when two other women came forward and offered to carry it to the mission for us. Their offer was gratefully accepted, for we were wondering how to get home with that precious parcel on a bicycle.

On returning home, a wooden packing case, lined with cotton-wool was prepared. Two little brick pillars held a sheet of metal

over a charcoal fire. The case was placed on the metal sheet, thus providing a warm little bed.

A bath came first then new clothes, and the baby was ready for her improvised bed. She weighed 2 lbs. 8 ozs. when she arrived; and now, after three weeks she has gained two more pounds.

All the people around here are astounded. Even staunch pagans come to see her and they openly show their admiration.

At our maternity I give lessons in child welfare and hygiene to the women. It is easy to speak about God and His love for them and this brings about conversions later on. I asked the women whether this business of throwing premature babies into the bush happened very often. They told me it was an everyday affair. No one would think of trying to keep “things” like that alive.

So now I have gone a step further and asked the natives to bring their unwanted babies to the mission, so that we could try to save their lives. Being convinced now that it is possible, the natives gladly bring them. This means a new work is starting at this recently founded mission. We cannot hope to save the lives of all the babies that will be brought here, but we will have the consolation of sending many of them to heaven.

Sr. M. Trinitas, W. S.



Returning From An Outing

EVER SINCE MY ARRIVAL at Kisubi over a year ago, I have been wanting to tell you about the novelties at the Junior Boys' School as well as those of the bush schools. Around here MUZUNGU (foreigner's) brooms and brushes, as they are called, are above the means of most pocket-books, but substitutes are plentiful and give satisfactory results. While supervising the evening wash of our boys, did I not see several of them using corn cobs instead of unexisting finger nail brushes . . . also how thoroughly they scrub the soles of their feet on the few stones at the entrance to the BINABIRO (wash rooms). Besides for sponges they use the fruit of a gourd-like plant. As for toothbrushes, well they simply go to the "tooth brush" tree in the forest for a provision . . . all on God's credit.

When it is house cleaning time and our boys need scrubbing brushes, they run to a very thick cedar-like hedge, planted to separate their playground and the hospital and cut for themselves custom made scrub brushes. We never buy brooms. A few times each term the boys have an outing to the distant fields where they gather NKONZIKONZI, a tall grass from which they make brooms during the handwork lessons.

Of course we must purchase paper and copy books and the children are provided with what they need. However, this means money, which is quite a rarity around here; and while using what is needed, we try to be sparing. For example, following the gentle rains when the ground is good for writing, you can see the younger children walking out with their colored sticks (dyed with colors from plants) for Arithmetic drills on additions and subtractions, or the young

From Our Sisters' Letters

Sr. Marie Amable who had taught at the Junior Boys' Boarding School at Kisubi, Uganda, gives us the following account of the ingeniousness of her pupils. At present, Sister is teaching at the Normal School at Virika.

artists would practise the drawings they would later put down on paper.

At Kisubi the children are fairly well provided with coloring crayons and water colors . . . not a set for each pupil . . . but by exchanging colors and also arranging drawing lessons at different times, we manage satisfactorily. But in the village schools these articles are rarely seen. To satisfy their craving for colors, on the appointed day for drawing, the children come to school with flowers they have plucked on the way. After finishing their sketches on the ground, they cut out the flower petals to make the colored dresses, etc., of their pictures. "Necessity is the mother of invention." In a first grade village school, the children practise writing on a well lined banana leaf to spare the copy book for work well done.

Many a time I caught the boys writing or drawing with a pointed stick on their arms during an oral lesson. Though I could not approve of it, more than once I secretly admired the work. The boys are keen observers. I wish you could see some of the motor cars they draw; not a single thing is missing.

Now, I have bade farewell to Kisubi, my first mission, and exchanged the borders of Lake Victoria for the Rwenzori Mountains, Junior Boys for Normal School Girls. With the latter I am not well acquainted as yet; since I arrived shortly before vacation time or holidays as they say here.

I would already have much to tell you about here, but it will be for another time. There is plenty of work at Virika and more primitive than the Buganda province, but very interesting. Here more than before, I feel and see that the laborers are too few. It is crushing, or would be, if God were not above.

CHIEF MUKOMBE DIES A CATHOLIC

It is not unusual for a pagan Chief to enter the Church at the hour of death. The prayers of their Christian people seem to obtain from God special graces which soften the hearts of such men when death is near. We recently received word that MUKOMBE, Saza Chief of the Kabale district of Uganda, asked to be baptized on his death bed. Mukombe's sympathies had always been with the Catholics; when asked to vote on controversial subjects he had always sided with the Catholic Chiefs. His keen sense of justice and upright character permitted him to exercise great influence upon the people.

When warned that his illness was fatal, he called for the mission catechist and expressed the desire of becoming a Catholic. Before witnesses and members of his family, Mukombe renounced all his pagan beliefs and was baptized. He died a short time later. This conversion has had a remarkable result upon the people who respected and admired their chieftain.

MOTHER ANNELLY WRITES FROM MINGA, RHODESIA

The mother of one of the baby girls who were born at the Maternity these days, asked us to name her child. This is a very important affair and asking us to do it is a real token of confidence. It had to be a pagan name for the mother is a pagan. In all probability the infant would have been called something like "To the Cemetery" had she been born at home, for all her predecessors had died in infancy. We suggested that when she grew up she would have to come to our school, and we named her "Cakuminga" (To Mingo). The whole family was delighted with the idea.

A few weeks later Cakuminga had a little cousin. He was born just while the ANGELUS was ringing, so I said he should be called "Timione" which is the first word of the Hail Mary (Timione Maria). The father was delighted. He is a very good man and says he wants to become a Catholic. We can do much good through the hospital and especially through the Maternity, where many lives are saved.

The last parcel was most welcome. I was just wondering how I could get hold of some balls, and there they were. The nursery things were also much appreciated. May our

dear Lord bless and reward all our kind benefactors.

CHRISTMAS IN KABYLIA (Concluded)

reach the goal first. It is as exciting a tournament as the best of horse races.

Moreover, the efforts of the last four weeks have not been in vain and the results worthwhile mentioning abound. Surely our little Kabyles have their faults but they are generous and undoubtedly the Infant Jesus will bless them, and hear their prayers in favor of their kind benefactors whose generosity enabled us to give them so much joy at Christmas time. Sr. M. St. Godard, W. S.

TWINS IN URUNDI (Concluded)

becomes the happy hunting ground for the rats, ants, and other animals, but who cares?

Yes, these customs still exist in Urundi. However, conversions are numerous and evidently the Catholics have given up these practices. The pagans are becoming more and more aware of the fact that Catholic twins bring no evil and they are beginning to ask to have their babies baptized. It is a means of bringing about the truth that baptism does do away with evil spirits and makes us children of a good God.

Obituary

We recommend to the prayers of our readers the souls of:

Rev. Blasius J. Zeiser, O. S. A., Villanova, Pa.
Sister M. Noeline, S. C., Convent Station, N. J.
Mrs. Lena Liebenritt, Omaha, Nebr.
Mrs. Cecilia Sally, Roxbury, Mass.
Mr. George Hughes, Jersey City, N. J.
Mrs. Genevieve Coughlin, Woodbridge, N. J.

Mrs. Peter J. O'Rielly, Guild Member, Jersey City, N. J.
Mr. Albert De Sanctis, Metuchen, N. J.
Mrs. Maurice Essman, New Brunswick, N. J.
Mr. William E. Junker, Indianapolis, Ind.
Mr. James Breen, Metuchen, N. J.
Phyllis Anne Skow, Omaha, Nebraska

ECHOES . . . From Africa

Little Gabriel was three years old when his two months old sister died. Many times he asked where was Mary Claude. He was told that she was with Jesus. When Christmas was approaching, his mama asked him what he wanted the Baby Jesus to bring him. Without a moment of hesitation he answered: "I want Him to bring my little sister back to me."

When he was five years old, a Sister going to the garden to gather some flowers for a feast of the Blessed Virgin, met him with his playmate Paul. She invited them to accompany her and allowed them to pick some flowers to take home to their mothers; so that they could put them before the picture of our Blessed Mother. When each one had a nice bouquet, Sister told them they had enough. "Oh, Sister, it is not sufficient," replied Gaby, "we must love the Blessed Virgin more than that."

Another time, Gaby came to the dispensary with his father. The Sister, whose back was turned preparing an injection, heard the following conversation between the father and son:

"Daddy, why do you quarrel with ladies and girls?"

"I don't quarrel with ladies and girls," replied the father.

"Daddy, why do you quarrel with women and girls?"

"What are you talking about? I don't quarrel with anybody."

"Daddy, why did you quarrel with my mama, isn't she nice?"

It was catechism time and Sister questioned the children.

"How is it that we cannot see God?"

"Because we are not pure spirits," answered Isabella.

"When did the Son of God become Man?"

"When the Blessed Virgin became a Mother," replied Lecadia.

"What souls will go to Limbo?"

"The souls of babies who are not baptized and the old women who do not know God," according to Veronica's answer.

Many abandoned babies are received at the missions and are taken care of in our orphanages. Little Carolina was but two days old when she was found. Today she is three and loves Jesus. She does not like to see Him attached to the crucifix and pleads with Sister to take Him down because the nails hurt Him. She does not like to see the crown of thorns on His head either.

One day when Carolina was very naughty, Sister told her she was putting a thorn in Jesus' head. She felt very bad and immediately asked pardon of Jesus and promised never to begin again.

AN UMBRELLA

The following took place in one of the native stores at a mission. A square hut, on the walls of which were hanging a few pieces of bright colored calicos; boxes on the floor; soap, knives, thread, etc.

The store keeper is sitting on the floor smoking his pipe.

A European, who taken unawares is in dire need of an umbrella enters.

Store keeper: "How do you do? What do you want?"

"I want to buy an umbrella. Have you any on hand?"

"Yes, good ones and, believe me, reasonable."

"How much are they?"

"Fifteen shillings. See how well they open and close!"

"Is the color fast?"

"It is guaranteed; give me news of it later. My stock comes directly from Dares Salaam."

"I'll take it; here is the money."

"Good day, call again."

A FEW WEEKS LATER, SAME PERSONS

The customer: "The umbrella you sold me is no good; you have deceived me."

The irritated store keeper: "I? Why I sell only good things."

"You told me the colors were fast."

"Yes, and what about it?"

"Well, it has lost all its color!"

The storekeeper was silent and perplexed. Then seeing dark spots on the customer's white suit, an idea came to him.

"But haven't you been out in the rain with it?"

"Of course, isn't that what an umbrella is for?"

"Ah! now I understand. You should not have done so . . . or at least you should have told me . . . it is an umbrella for the sun only."



Joy Reigns at the Novitiate



Photographs courtesy of "The Messenger," East St. Louis, Ill.

THE 28th OF OCTOBER, the Feast of Christ the King, was a day full of holy activity at our Novitiate. At an early Mass five young aspirants received the Postulant's veil and cross. This marks the beginning of their Missionary Career.

Shortly after, His Excellency, Bishop Zuroweste arrived. Before the ceremony of Investiture and Profession, the big events of the day, His Excellency dedicated our new little chapel. This being accomplished, relatives and friends entered the House of God, while the Bishop vested for the Holy Sacrifice. Two African priests from Uganda, who are studying at St. Louis University for the betterment of their compatriots, assisted His Excellency, giving the ceremony an African screening.

After Mass, the Rt. Rev. Msgr. Hoff gave a sermon in which he said that although many hardships await these future missionaries, they will find complete happiness and joy in working for the salvation of souls . . . a happiness and joy that all the money in the world cannot buy . . .

At the conclusion of this most inspiring message, three happy Postulants in bridal gowns went up to the altar where the Bishop was seated to receive from him the habit of the Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa. Withdrawing for awhile to change their bridal attire for the Livery of Christ, they returned to the chapel and their happiness was complete on hearing their religious names.

Frances Challenor¹ became Sister Loretta

Mary, Stella Mary Jabonoski², Sister Valeria Marie and Elizabeth Zadnik³, Sister Monica Augustin.

In the meantime the long awaited moment arrived for Sister Amelia Therese⁴ and Sister Benedicta Marie⁵ to take their first vows, making them full fledged White Sisters and entitling them to leave for the Promised Land, Africa.

The entire ceremony with its setting of musical accompaniment and spiritual atmosphere, rendered the day an edifying one according to the unanimous opinion of those present.

At the close of the ceremony, the Bishop congratulated the elect of the day and remarked that the newly dedicated chapel, in all its simplicity was similar to a little mission chapel. His final words were, "Here, before this altar, we adore the same Christ as the young Sisters will adore in the far off mission field."

As this goes to print, a group of 15 White Sisters are preparing to leave for Africa; Sister Amelia Therese and Sister Benedicta Marie are overjoyed at the thought that soon they will be on the high seas heading for their goal . . . AFRICA . . . SOULS and CHRIST.

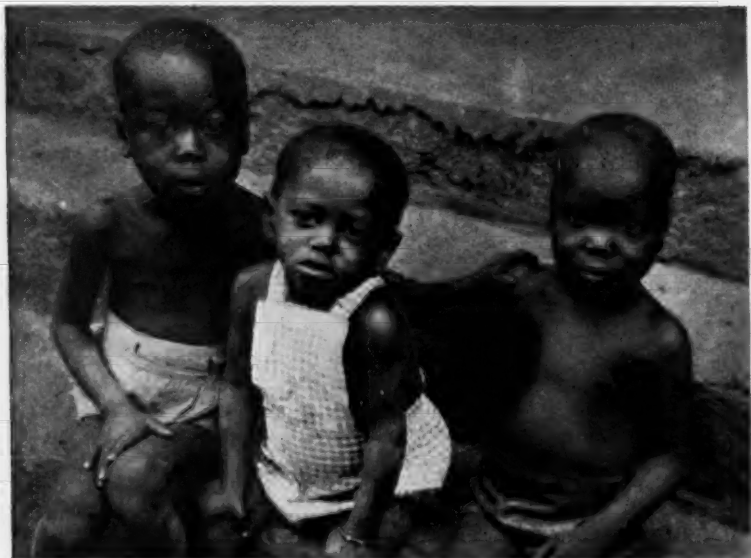
¹ from White Plains, New York.

² from Albany, New York.

³ from Taber, Ontario.

⁴ Sophia Sluka, from Jersey City, N. J.

⁵ Rose Marie Huber, from Mt. Angel, Oregon



WHEN WE LOOK AT THESE CHILDREN we think of the future of Africa. If the love of our Lord is deeply rooted in their hearts, they will be brave and loyal to their Redeemer.

It is at Christmas time that children are brought nearer to God; it is the time when our dear Lord wins their hearts. Will you not help by giving them a Christmas full of joy and happiness?

They never taste candy!

New clothes are a luxury!

Will they have meat on that great day?

The Infant Jesus counts on your generosity and He will shower His choicest blessings on all those who will help to make His Birthday a joyful day for His African children. And would our Blessed Mother let go unrewarded your charity which will make these little ones love her divine Babe?

All those who will send a Christmas offering will have a special memento in the Christmas Novena of all the White Sisters.

